

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

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R 022254Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3537

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 8198

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EC, PE

SUBJ: RODRIGUEZ ATTENDANCE AT AYACUCHO CONTINUES VERY MUCH IN
DOUBT

REF: QUITO 8080

1. EL COMERCIO, A LEADING QUITO NEWSPAPER, SAID ON DECEMBER 1
THAT PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ WOULD ANNOUNCE HIS DECISION ON WHETHER
TO ATTEND THE AYACUCHO CELEBRATION IN PERU ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER
3. IN THE MEANTIME, SIGNS CONTINUE TO MULTIPLY THAT HE IS
UNLIKELY TO ATTEND.

2. ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH, PERUVIAN FONMIN GENERAL MIGUEL
ANGEL DE LA FLOR AND MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GENERAL
FRANCISCO MIRO ARRIVED IN QUITO. DE LA FLOR SAW THE
PRESIDENT FOR HALF AN HOUR BUT THE BEST HE WAS ABLE TO
OBTAIN WAS A STATEMENT THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS STUDYING THE
MATTER. DE LA FLOR, INTERVIEWED UPON DEPARTING THE
PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, SAID THAT THERE WERE SOME CHIEFS
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OF STATE WHO COULD NOT ATTEND, BECAUSE THERE WERE ALWAYS

"INTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH COME UP AT THE LAST MOMENT IN ANY COUNTRY WHICH WILL PREVENT ATTENDANCE". PERU ATTACHES, HOWEVER, "GREAT SIGNIFICANCE TO THE ATTENDANCE OF (ECUADOREAN PRESIDENT) GENERAL RODRIGUEZ LARA" AT THE CEREMONIES COMMEMORATING THE BATTLE OF AYACUCHO. DE LA FLOR NOTED WITH GREAT PLEASURE THE PROSPECTIVE ATTENDANCE OF ECUADOREAN FOREIGN MINISTER LUCIO PAREDES (WHICH HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED SOME TIME EARLIER), ALMOST AS TACIT ACCEPTANCE OF THE UNLIKELIHOOD THAT PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ WOULD ATTEND.

3. THE SAME DAY, DECEMBER 1, EL COMERCIO, QUITO'S LEADING DAILY, PUBLISHED AN EDITORIAL WHICH ON THE WHOLE CAME DOWN ON THE SIDE OF THE PRESIDENT'S NON-ATTENDANCE. FOR THE FIRST TIME IT PUBLICLY ALLUDED TO STANDING PROBLEMS WITH PERU, SITING THAT "THE ECUADOREAN PUBLIC HAS NOT FORGOTTEN THE DRAMAS OF THE PAST CONCERNING ITS TERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY". THE EDITORIAL WENT ON ABOUT ECUADOR'S DEVOTION TO THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES, BUT MADE CLEAR THAT THE BORDER PROBLEMS WITH PERU HAVE NOT BEEN DISMISSED. COMERCIO REMINDED ITS READERS THAT PERU HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY TREATED TO EVIDENCE OF ECUADOREAN GOOD FAITH, AND CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS PERHAPS TIME FOR A LITTLE PERUVIAN RECIPROCITY. THEN FOR GOOD MEASURE, THE EDITORIAL ADDED THAT "TO GO TO LIMA AT THIS MOMENT WOULD PUT AN ECUADOREAN PRESIDENT ON THE SPOT AT A MOMENT OF GRAVE AND DANGEROUS INTERNAL PERUVIAN POLITICAL CONTROVERSY"; THE CONCLUSION BEING THAT "PROTOCOL CONSIDERATIONS" SHOULD NOT BE THE DECIDING ISSUE. ALMOST AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT, THE EDITORIAL RAISED THE POSSIBILITY THAT IF PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA ATTENDED THE LIMA CELEBRATIONS, IT COULD ROUSE PUBLIC DISSENTION HERE AGAINST PRESENT INTERNAL PERUVIAN POLICIES. SINCE COMERCIO, AS ITS NAME IMPLIES, DEVOTES ITSELF (AND MOST SUCCESSFULLY) TO MAKING MONEY, IT IS SELDOM OUT IN FRONT ON PUBLIC ISSUES. THE FACT THAT IT TOOK A STAND NOW SUGGESTS TO THE SKEPTICAL THAT IT KNOWS WHAT THE DECISION WILL BE OR WAS ASKED TO COMMENT IN THIS VEIN.

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4. FINALLY, THE CELEBRATION OF THE FOUNDING OF THE ECUADORAAN ARMY MILITARY ACADEMY IS SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 6TH THROUGH 12TH. REPRESENTATIVES OF SEVEN COUNTRIES ARE ATTENDING, INCLUDING THE SUPERINTENDENT OF WEST POINT. PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ IS PUBLICLY SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH THE GROUP ON DECEMBER 9TH AND 11TH. BREWSTER

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